

HISTORY OF SPAIN

II

NEW STONE AGE

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Figs. 1-2. EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF DOLMEN

Cave of Mengá, Antequera, Málaga

(Pijoán, José. *El arte prehistórico europeo*. Madrid, 1934. p. [209], 212)

Of extraordinary size is this dolmen with its corridor and roughly oval chamber formed of huge slabs of the limestone found in the district, partly dressed like those at Stonehenge, England. The corridor is short, the chamber about eighty-one feet long, over nineteen feet wide, and approximately nine feet high, with three monolithic pillars along the mid-line and five great stones for the roof. The whole was covered with an earthen mound about one hundred feet in diameter.



Figs. 3-4. EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF DOLMEN CORRIDOR
Cave of El Vaquero, Gandul, Sevilla
Photos. Bonsor

This dolmen, lined with small flat rocks in horizontal tiers, is of the false-domed type. The circular chamber was fashioned in an uncompleted dome, capped by a slab of rock.





Fig. 5. ENGRAVED STONE

Granite. Height 139.5 cm.

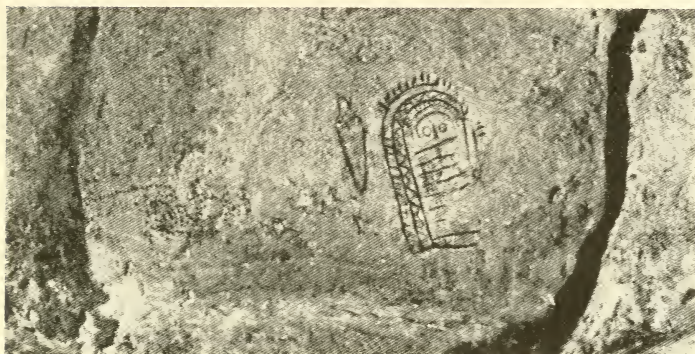
From La Granja del Toniñuelo, Jerez de los Caballeros, Badajoz

Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional

(Photo. Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

Within the oval of the face are lines for nose and mouth, dots for eyes. A headdress is represented by one row of dots and two of parallel radiating lines, a necklace by four curved lines. Arms end in fingers which rest on an ornamented band, perhaps meant for a belt. The stone probably belongs to the same civilization as a dolmen near the place where it was found and dates from the end of the Aëneolithic period.





Figs. 6-7. VIEW OF ROCK; PAINTINGS AND ENGRAVINGS

Rock shelter of Peña Tú, Puertas, Llanes, Asturias

(Hernández-Pacheco, Eduardo, Cabré, Juan, and Vega del Sella, conde de la, *Las pinturas prehistóricas de Peña Tú*. Madrid, 1914. pl. [1]; Menéndez Pidal, Ramón. *Historia de España*, Madrid, 1947. v. 1, p. 482)

On the wall of the shelter provided by the jutting out of this rock appear paintings and engravings. At the right, a schematic figure (Height 1 m.—Width 62 cm.), perhaps representing an idol, is engraved and painted in red. Beside it is an engraving (Height 63 cm.—Width 13 cm.) which has been interpreted as a metal dagger, the red dots in it indicating holes for riveting the blade to the hilt. There are also stylized human figures and quantities of dots, all in red.



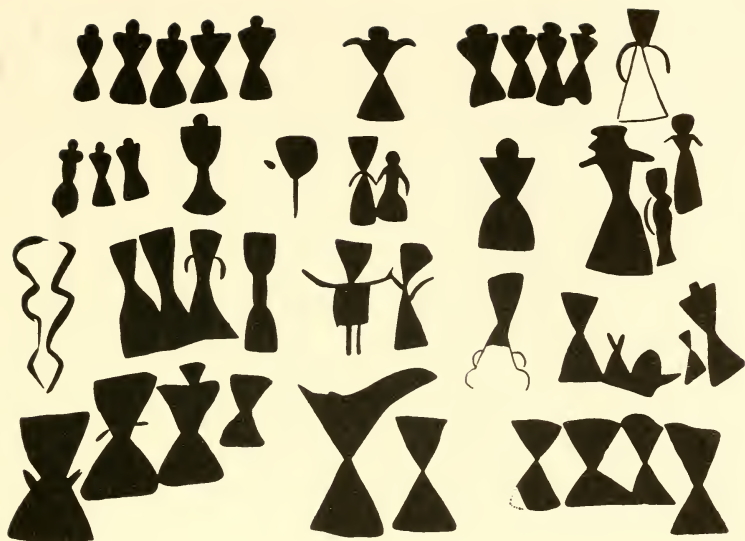


Fig. 8. PAINTINGS

Rock shelter of Las Viñas, Zarza, Alange, Badajoz

(Drawing in Breuil, Henri, *Les peintures rupestres schématiques de la péninsule ibérique*. Lagny [-sur-Marne] 1935. v. 2, p. 121)

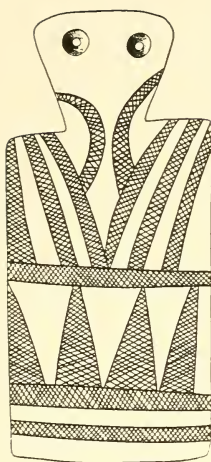
These schematic figures, chiefly of “Almerian Women”, so-called after figurines found in that section, have been taken from various parts of the painting on the rock shelter. They are done in yellow, orange, pale red, and red. The centre groups appear to show a woman with a child and a man in a short tunic accompanied by a woman in a long dress.



RITUAL OBJECTS

Fig. 9. Heights 11.5 cm. and 9 cm. From Purchena, Almería
 Figs. 10-11. Heights 13 cm. and 14 cm. From Almizaraque, Almería
Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional (Louis Siret Collection)
 (Photos. Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

Characteristic for Almería are figurines of soft stone, talc, or bone with jutting arms between the upper and the lower ends, which are usually triangular. In the same section, chiefly at Almizaraque and Los Millares, have been found phalanges or longer bones decorated with round eyes and linear ornamentation.



RITUAL OBJECTS

Fig. 12. Height 17.8 cm. From Alemtejo, Portugal. *Belem. Museu*
(Åberg, Nils. *La civilisation énéolithique dans la péninsule ibérique*. Uppsala, etc. [1921] p. 36, fig. 23)

Figs. 13-14. Height 19 cm. Probably from Extremadura
Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional

(Photos. Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

A projection for the head and crudely indicated eyes and nose appear on some of the rectangular schist plaques found in caves and dolmens in Portugal and neighbouring parts of Spain. These plaques, as well as occasional pieces curved like a shepherd's crook, are often covered with designs of hatched triangles or zigzags and pierced at the top. From this region also come cylinders of stone, the most elaborate having two great round eyes beneath eyebrow-crescents, a group of curved or angular lines below the eyes, and stylized hair on the top and back.



Fig. 15. POTTERY BELL BEAKER
 Height 13 cm.—Diameter 13.7 cm.
 From Ciempozuelos, Madrid
Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional
 (Photo. Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

The beaker is of the shape known as campaniform because of its resemblance to an inverted bell. On vessels of this unglazed ware, geometrical designs of incised lines and pricked dots contrast with highly polished, dark areas. The designs are often inlaid with a whitish paste, but whether this incrustation was intentional or a chance filling caused by burial in gypseous or limy soil has not been determined. Bell-beaker pottery was shaped by hand without the aid of a wheel.



E15

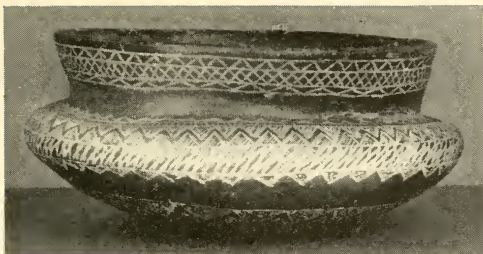
Fig. 16. FOOTED POTTERY BOWL

Height 12.4 cm.—Diameter 20.5 cm.

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

Aëneolithic bowls like oversized goblets have been found only in the Carmona region of the Iberian Peninsula, where the bell beaker and its culture appeared in greatest splendour. In the Hispanic Society's collection are 23 vessels and 16 fragments of this ware, discovered by the late George Edward Bonsor at El Acebuchal, a site in the Guadalquivir River valley between Sevilla and Carmona. The bowl here illustrated was found in 1899.



E23

Figs. 17-18. POTTERY BOWL

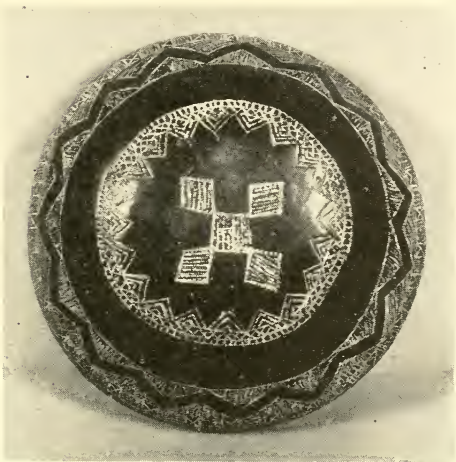
Height 10.3 cm.—Diameter 22.9 cm.

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

One of the principal shapes encountered in Aëneolithic pottery is a form with rounded base and projecting collar, of which numerous variants occur in the Carmona region. Potters of this age in Spain probably used esparto-grass baskets as the models for ceramic forms, while the many weaves may have suggested motives for decorating this earthenware. Bowl E23 was found in 1899.





E2

Figs. 19-20. POTTERY BOWL

Height 7.8 cm.—Diameter 21 cm.

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of

El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

In hut foundations, which were the remains of a village, and in wells covered by mounds of stones, Bonsor discovered many pieces of this decorated black ware, buried with copper daggers, arrow-heads, and axes, an indication of close contact with the metal-producing regions of Almería and southern Portugal. This bowl of hemispherical shape, a characteristic form, was excavated in 1910 from the foundation of a hut at El Acebuchal.



E4

Height 13 cm. — Diameter 20 cm.



E19

Height 14.5 cm. — Diameter 25 cm.

Figs. 21-22. POTTERY BOWLS

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

The richness of decoration and the variety of shape displayed by the Aëneolithic pottery which George Edward Bonsor unearthed at El Acebuchal have contributed toward making the Carmona region recognized as the most important centre of the bell-beaker culture in the Iberian Peninsula. Bowl E4 was found in 1909. Both bowls are variations in form of E23.





E2

Figs. 23-24. POTTERY BOWL WITH COVER

Height 11.5 cm.—Diameter 12.3 cm.

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

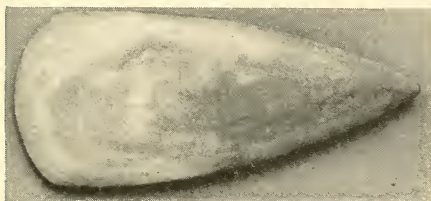
The Hispanic Society of America

Vessels of bell-beaker ware shaped like this small, covered bowl seem to have been produced only in the Carmona region, although similar forms have come from Los Millares and El Argar, indicating the influence which the people of the Guadalquivir valley exerted on the less cultivated folk of Almería. Bowl and cover were found together in 1909.





Length 14.5 cm.—Width 10.2 cm.



Length 17.7 cm.—Width 7.7 cm.



AX HEADS AND AX

Figs. 25–26. From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at El Campo Real and at the necropolis of El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

Fig. 27. From the Cave of Los Blanquizares de Lébor, Totana, Murcia Vera, Almería. Collection of Juan Cuadrado Ruiz

(*Archivo español de arte y arqueología*. January–April 1930, v. 6, fig. 7 following p. 65)

Countless polished ax heads, the most characteristic objects of the New Stone Age, have been found throughout Spain, varying in size, material, and form. Jadeite, granite, basalt, diorite were used, and for some of the finer examples, fibrolite and serpentine. At first triangular with pointed head, the ax later had a flat head and quadrangular cross section. It was probably hafted in the same way as the ax of fibrolite from a sepulchral cave at Totana, one of the rare examples found with the original wooden handle.





Fig. 28. SICKLE

Length of blade 44 cm.—Length of handle 23.6 cm.

Reconstructed with flints from excavations by George Edward Bonsor
at the necropolis of El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

Serrated flints found scattered over the ground once belonged in sickles. Neolithic man fitted the flints into a groove in a wooden blade and fastened them with bitumen. Knowing the form of the implement from an example discovered in Egypt, Bonsor had this model constructed.



Fig. 29. FLINT KNIVES

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla
The Hispanic Society of America

These knives, selected from a group of 126 in the Society's collection, show the art of chipping in the New Stone Age. Ranging in length from about two centimetres to six and a half, they are small in comparison with examples unearthed at other sites. Some of the finest are as long as thirty-five centimetres.





Fig. 30. NECKLACE

From the Cave of Los Blanquizaes de Lébor, Totana, Murcia

Vera, Almería. Collection of Juan Cuadrado Ruiz

(*Archivo español de arte y arqueología*, January–April 1930. v. 6, fig. 10 following p. 56)

Among personal adornments from Aëneolithic sites the ornament found most frequently is the necklace made from a variety of materials—animal teeth, thin flakes of bone, shells, and stones combined with amber or callaïs. In this necklace from the cave at Totana pierced snail shells and different kinds of beads have been restrung in the original sequence. A similar necklace and numerous separate beads of greenish paste, black clay, and alabaster were also found in the cave.

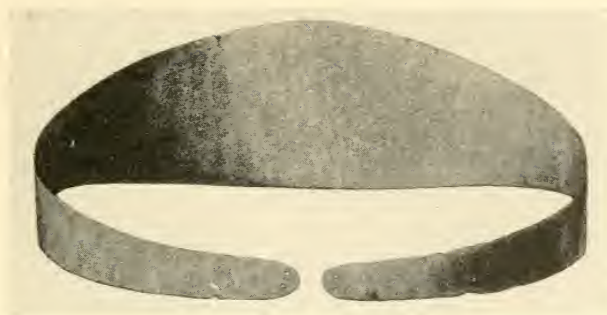


Fig. 31. GOLD DIADEM

From the Cave of Los Murciélagos, Albuñol, Granada

Granada. Museo Arqueológico Provincial

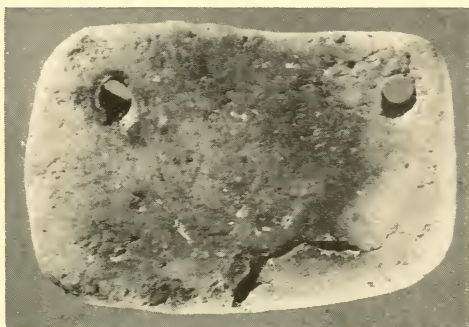
(Drawing in Góngora y Martínez, Manuel de. *Antigüedades prehistóricas de Andalucía*, Madrid, 1868.
pl. 1, no. 1)

The first example of goldsmith's work of this period to be discovered in Spain was this diadem, found on a skeleton in the cave. From pure gold hammered into a thin sheet and cut out by means of a stone hatchet, the band tapers at the extremities and shows a smooth surface without ornamentation.



E62

Height 6.1 cm. — Width 9.2 cm.



E51

Height 6.3 cm. — Width 9.2 cm.

Figs. 32-33. TERRA-COTTA LOOM WEIGHTS

From excavations by George Edward Bonsor at the necropolis of
El Acebuchal, near Carmona, Sevilla

The Hispanic Society of America

A growing appreciation of plants and their uses made possible the production of textiles. Esparto grass probably was utilized first. The cultivation of flax gave primitive weavers more pliable threads with which to work. Although sizable pieces woven of esparto have been preserved, woven linen survives only in fragments, charred or adhering to metals. Loom weights are a sign that the vertical loom was already in use.

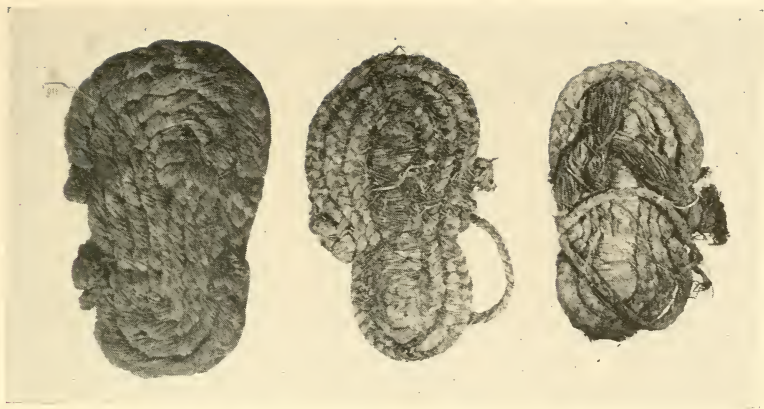


Fig. 34. SANDALS OF ESPARTO GRASS
 From the Cave of Los Murciélagos, Albuñol, Granada
Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional
 (Photos. Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

In the sandals—eighteen at least, whole or fragmentary—which were found in the Cave of Los Murciélagos, the principal element was a stout braid of esparto grass. The sole was made either with a continuous braid or with a central panel wound with plain grasses and surrounded by three or four turns of braid. Through the sole under the instep was drawn a narrow braid, or braids, of which the ends made a secure ankle fastening. The fore part was held to the foot with a lengthwise loop attached at the toe and held taut at the top with a crosswise strand.

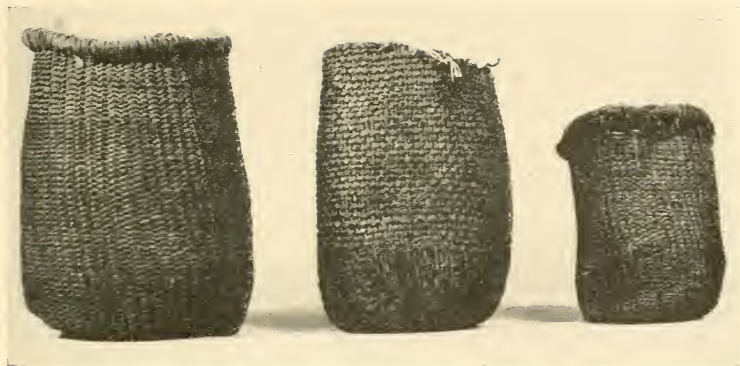


Fig. 35. BASKETS OF ESPARTO GRASS
From the Cave of Los Murciélagos, Albuñol, Granada
Madrid. Museo Arqueológico Nacional
(Photo, Courtesy of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional)

Ideal for baskets was the tough esparto grass. Well-preserved examples from the Cave of Los Murciélagos show a surprising variety of plaitwork. While coiled work was most frequent, there was also basketry with twine weave and, in a few cases, with braid weave.

